

Holbein's Miniature of Thomas Cromwell

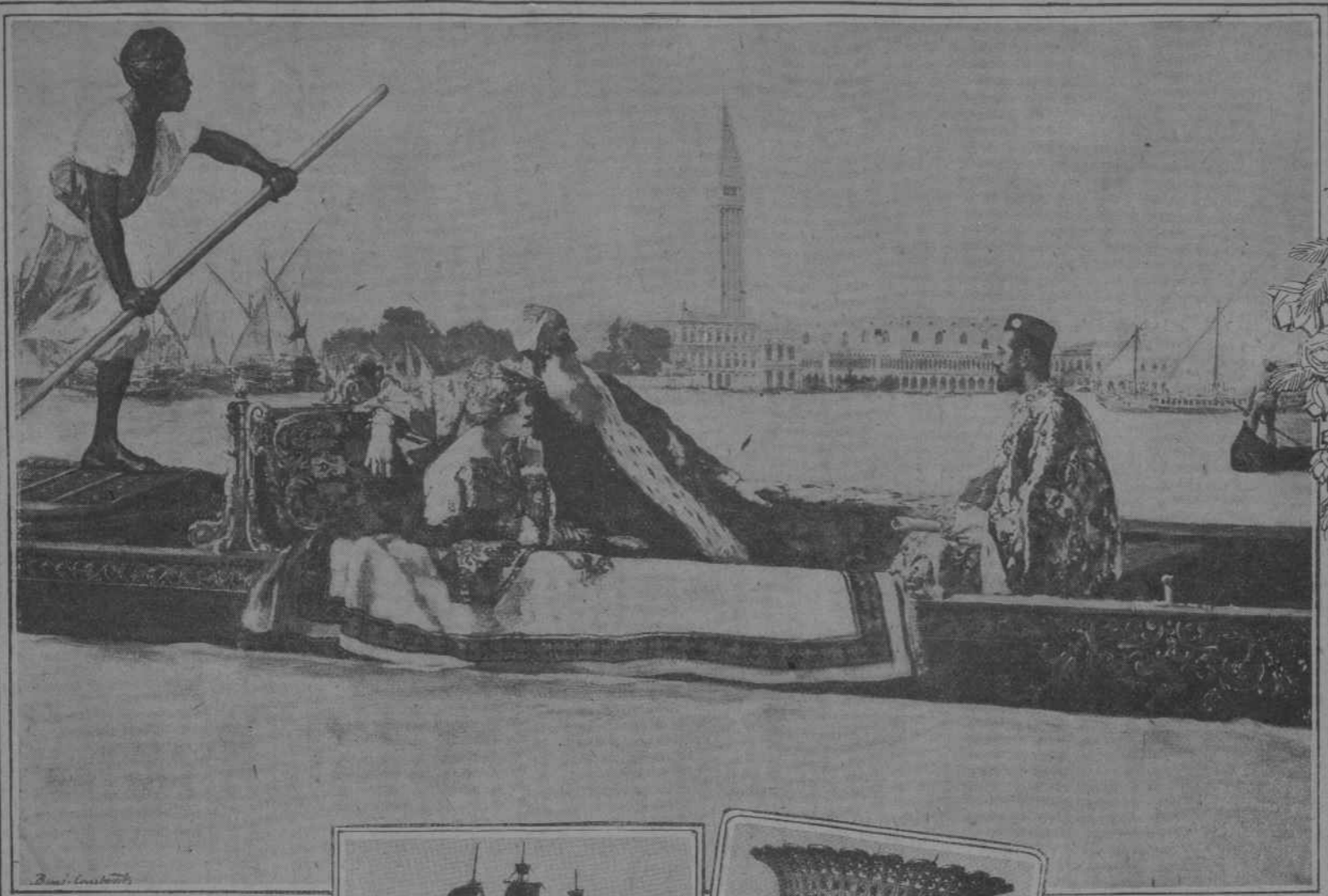
Lately Added to the Collection of Mr. J. P. Morgan—The Military Hospital of Versailles and Its Fine Bas Relief of the Seasons—More Art Treasures from the Yerkes Collection

[From the European Edition of the Herald]

MR. J. PIERPONT MORGAN'S collection of miniatures has recently been enriched by a painting which is without doubt a portrait of Thomas Cromwell, Count of Essex, by Holbein. This miniature, which is round in shape and painted on vellum or leather, pasted onto cardboard, is mounted in a frame of carved ivory. Thomas Cromwell's features are easily recognizable, with his commonplace nose, his shifty eyes extended from the corner by lines.

Cromwell's career was a most extraordinary one. He was the son of a Putney ironworker, and from a common soldier in the French service he rose to be the King's secretary, Vice Governor, Keeper of the Seals and Prime Minister. His career is like that of a hero of romance. In 1531, shortly after the death of Wolsey, he was appointed a member of the Privy Council; in 1532 Lord Guardian of the Treasury, and in 1533, after having established his supremacy in the Cabinet, he was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the following year he was the King's secretary and keeper of the archives, and was furthermore called upon to fulfil the duties of vicar general of the King in carrying out the Act of Supremacy.

The following year he attended the execution of Anne Boleyn, and after her father's disgrace he got himself appointed



"Othello and Desdemona," by Benjamin Constant
Courtesy of the American Art Galleries

an oil painting of Cromwell in the same style as the miniature, a painting that can only have been done by Holbein and doubtless at about the same period.

VERSAILLES ART.

[From the European Edition of the Herald]

AT Versailles the Military Hospital, after the palace, is one of the most imposing buildings. It is worth a



Parcel Gilt Silver Nef, Nuremberg, Seventeenth Century
Courtesy of the American Art Galleries



Clock from the Prince Demidoff Collection
Courtesy of the American Art Galleries



Centre Piece, Empire Style
Courtesy of the American Art Galleries



Miniature Portrait of Thomas Cromwell, by Holbein
Collection of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan



Portrait of Thomas Cromwell, by Holbein
Collection of Mons. Leon Cardon, Brussels

Keeper of the Seals. In that year the King created him Baron Cromwell of Oakham. Thenceforth he held the chief power in England. In August, 1537, he was created a Knight of the Garter, and during the two following years he busied himself with pillaging the monasteries and enriching his friends and creatures. He became Grand Chamberlain in 1539. It was then that he was ordered to arrange the King's marriage with Anne of Cleves. For this service he was created Count of Essex. This was the apogee of his rapid fortune, and in July, 1540, he mounted the scaffold. Cromwell's period of elevation corresponds, therefore, with Hans Holbein's second sojourn in London. The fact that this artist was commanded to go to Germany to paint the portrait of the Princess of Cleves and received orders from Cromwell to paint it as seductively as possible clearly shows the intimate relations that existed between the painter and the powerful Minister. The rare portraits of Cromwell which appear authentic are all attributed to Holbein.

Cromwell Portraits.
As Mr. Lionel Cust points out in one of the last numbers of the Burlington Magazine, these portraits are divided into two groups, or three at the most, each group based on a prototype. The first group represents the sitter slightly in profile turned to the right, with the arm resting on a table on which a few books are placed. He is wearing a fur lined robe and a black cap, beneath which can be seen his gray hair cut round in the neck. The second group is that which shows Cromwell in profile toward the left with thin gray muttonchop whiskers, but very little hair showing beneath the cap. The irregular lines and thick eyebrows are more marked in this type of portrait, which is seen in several variations. Resembling closely this second group, although distinct from it, are the miniature belonging to Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan and the medallion in the British Museum.

Both this portrait and that of Anne of Cleves in the Salting collection having ivory frames, it would seem that they were both painted for Cromwell. A few extracts from Mr. Lionel Cust's article are particularly interesting at the time when the collection of Mons. Leon Cardon, in Brussels, has been enriched by



"Spring," Bas Relief Military Hospital, Versailles



"Summer," Bas Relief Military Hospital, Versailles

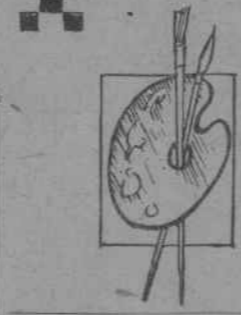
visit, if it be only to walk around it. Built between 1682 and 1685 by Mansart, this edifice first served under Louis XIV. for the services connected with the King's table, which were then termed the "seven offices of the King," and were composed of the cellar and kitchen for the King, and the kitchens and storerooms for the bread, fruit and wood for burning, and the cellars for officers of the King's household. This was called the "great commons," and it is said that as many as two thousand people could lodge in it. It occupies, in fact, an area of more than 4,500 square metres (about 5,381 square yards), in which is comprised an interior courtyard measuring about 46 by 39 metres (50 by 42 yards). An entire people of valets, cooks, pastry cooks and confectioners and quite an army of officials, high and low, according to Mons. Jehan, were lodged in the flanks of this Colosseum.

Under Louis XVI. it was used as a sort of hospice or almshouse. Then came the Revolution and after being abandoned for

a few months the buildings were converted into a manufactory of arms, which became one of the most celebrated in France. There arms were forged "to purge the earth of tyrants," and later it furnished the world with ornamental arms, and under the Empire with "arms d'honneur," destined to serve as "gifts" to the kings and leading princes of Europe. Becomes a School.

With the opening of a more pacific epoch the "great commons" became a "model school" for mutual instruction as well as for music and drawing. Then it was made into a home for orphans, until at last, in 1832, the edifice became what it is to-day, the military hospital for the entire department.

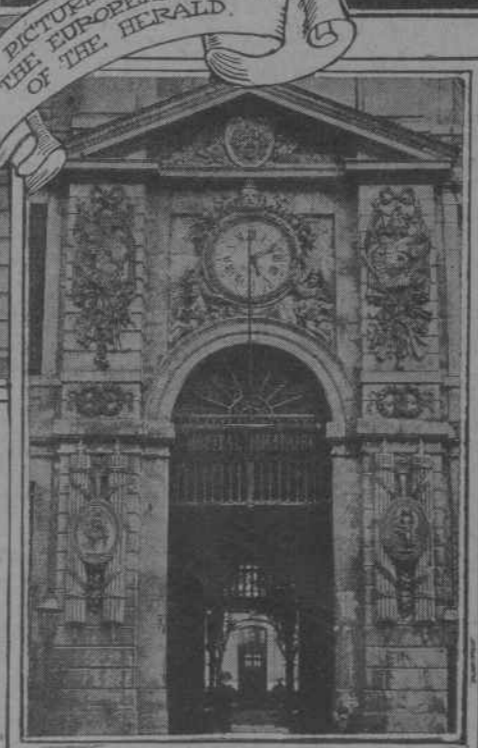
Apart from certain details of ornamentation in its fine monumental gate, on which, in fact, trophies of arms call to mind its present dedication to military uses, nothing has been changed in the external aspect of the edifice. Everything there would have remained as it was in the



Entrance to the Military Hospital, Versailles



Interior Court Military Hospital, Versailles



Entrance to the Military Hospital, Versailles



"Love's Missile," by Alma Tadema
Courtesy of the American Art Galleries

mony possess a suppleness and a grace which make one think of the delicious creations of Clodion before his time; without counting that by his wonderful execution the artist has conveyed the impression of sunlight and color, so warm and light is the atmosphere which envelops the figures. Quite otherwise is the medallion of "Summer." In it there prevail a freedom, and a simplicity which are full of grandeur. The figure which personifies the harvest is of the finest style, proud and delicate at the same time, with a charm the like of which will not be found for a long time, when it reappears in the work of that most gifted of French artists, the divine Prud'hon. This muse, in fact, is the sister of the proud symbolical figures of "Law," "Liberty" and "Messidor." All this, as one sees, is far from the ideas of sadness or suffering which are evoked by the place in which the young French soldiers receive the treatment they

house. The deck is occupied with figures of sailors, miniature cannon, steersman's wheel and windlass. The hull is elaborately repoussé, with foliated scrolls and amorini, and with subjects of Neptune in a chariot drawn by sea horses and attended by Tritons, and Neptune and Venus in a chariot drawn by dolphins and attended by amorini. On both sides is a rudder piece formed as a satyr's mask and a shaped rudder engraved with dolphins. At the bow a figurehead of a dolphin is holding the rudder chain, to which a movable rudder is attached. The whole is mounted on four wheels of pierced and repoussé work in a pattern of dolphins. This piece bears the Nuremberg mark of the seventeenth century. It is 27 1/4 inches high and 24 inches long.

Empire Vase Clock.

Of the Empire period is a malachite and ormolu vase clock, the case in the form of a vase with cover. It is mounted on a small quadrilateral base. The gilt ormolu ornaments and mountings consist of festoons, the coat of arms of Prince Demidoff, laurel mouldings and an acanthus finial. It has an enamelled revolving dial and an hour hand in the shape of a jewelled serpent. This piece is from the collection of Prince Demidoff and is said to have been made by Thomire, a French sculptor working in bronze (1751-1843). It is 25 inches high and 20 inches in diameter. A pair of malachite and ormolu side pieces are of First Empire design and period. Columnar shafts support tazzas and are mounted on triangular bases. The elaborate gilt ormolu mounts and ornaments consist of allegorical figures, scrolls and acanthus leaf patterns. This pair of side pieces also is said to be a production of Thomire. They are from the Prince Demidoff collection.

The French snuffboxes of eighteenth century provenance include one of circular shape, mounted and lined with gold. The lid is ornamented with a finely painted miniature of a bacchante by Pinelli and dated 1819. This miniature is under glass and framed in gold. Around the box is a band of floral designs chased in relief in vari-colored gold. Another of the snuffboxes is in gold and enamel and of the style and period of Louis XVI. The shape is oval, with hinged lid and chased gold mountings, with floral motives and translucent champlevé enamels. The lid is ornamented with an oval medallion of painted enamel, showing Mars and Minerva. This miniature is framed by a rim of chased and enamelled gold and imposed upon a field of translucent red enamel. The sides are divided into four panels of translucent red enamel applied over an engine turned ground, and intercepted by vases of flowers which are chased in relief and filled in with various opaque enamels. The bottom repeats the treatment of the sides.

Among other objects is an antique French fire screen, with an elaborate carved and gilt frame, surmounted by the three feathers of the Prince of Wales. Panels of old Beauvais tapestry of pastoral and other subjects and framed in floral and scroll borders on a rose pink background are charming features of this screen, which is 5 feet 8 inches high and 3 feet wide. An Empire centrepiece is in gilt ormolu. Figures of the Three Graces on a round base, supporting a basket shaped flower holder, are conspicuous in the design of this elaborate piece. A pair of red porphyry covered jars are of graceful oval form and are mounted in chiselled and gilt ormolu. The handles are of leaf scroll design. There is also a pair of Nubian marble covered urns in the Louis XVI style, of oval fluted pattern, mounted in skillfully chiselled ormolu, the handles in the design of entwined serpents. A filigree gold casket is of striking workmanship, the hinged lid surmounted by borders of brilliants and a rose ornament set with a sapphire surrounded by diamonds; the feet are of pearls mounted in gold.

MORE YERKES ART.

THE sale of the collection of art works in the estate of the late Charles T. Yerkes, one of the important ventures of the American Art Galleries, did not include the many pictures and objects d'art that belonged to or had been reserved for the widow. In the settlement of her estate these will be sold in February by Mr. Thomas E. Kirby. Besides the pictures, which include works by Benjamin Constant, Alma-Tadema and others, there are many objets d'art. These embrace gold and enamel antique watches and snuffboxes, objects in agate, malachite and porphyry, several from the Prince Demidoff collection, antique fans and laces, miniatures, clocks, bronzes and marbles, as well as antique and modern silver.

Among the large silver pieces is a parcel gilt silver nef—a ship made in two pieces, the hull forming a container for sweetmeats and the like, and the deck removable and forming the cover. The bulwarks are of pierced and repoussé work in scrolls. There are three square rigged masts, with crow's nests of pierced and repoussé work, one with the figure of a sailor.

Besides these there is a T shaped bridge, aft of which is a covered chariot